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FARMERS HARD-HIT BY DROUGHT
GET JOBS ON WILDLIFE REFUGES

Approximately 4,000 persons on relief, most of them farmers in the drought area, will begin work shortly on projects planned by the U. S. Bureau of Biological Survey for the restoration and improvement of 51 refuges for waterfowl and other wildlife on land either owned by the Federal Government or dedicated by farmers to the conservation of water.

An allotment of \$600,000 from Federal Emergency Relief funds to the Biological Survey for these projects planned in 9 States was recently approved by the President. States in which the work will be undertaken and funds allotted for labor and other expenses are: North Dakota, \$353,548; South Dakota, \$74,934; Montana, \$44,830; Nebraska, \$42,830; Louisiana, \$37,476; Wisconsin, \$10,709; Michigan, \$10,709; Oklahoma, \$7,500; and Wyoming, \$7,500.

Men in need of relief will be assigned to work on these projects by the Works Progress Administration. They will be employed at prevailing wages for such periods as will enable them to earn the maximum monthly W.P.A. security wage for the particular type of work they perform.

Officials of the Biological Survey explain that these projects are especially designed to provide permanent water supplies and to create Federal wildlife refuges at strategic locations and at the same time provide jobs for persons in need of relief. Certain portions of the water areas to be created will be left accessible to livestock.

In addition to these objectives the projects, according to the Survey, are planned to increase fur production and to check floods and soil erosion. The work will consist primarily of erecting earth fill dams, constructing spillways, riprapping with natural materials, digging diversion ditches, constructing patrol cabins, planting waterfowl food plants, and posting refuge boundaries. All the projects will be supervised and administered by the Survey.

"Farmers more than ever before are realizing the importance and value of conserving water supplies," say officials of the Biological Survey. "On many of the already-established refuges, particularly those in the Dakotas, certain portion of the water areas have been set aside as watering places for livestock.

"Development of refuges, in practically every case, involves the building of storage dams, marsh embankments, and other water-impoundment devices which help conserve water. The propagation and protection of heavy growths of vegetation for wildlife food and cover are important in the refuge development program and help check soil erosion."

"The direct economic return of this type of work can scarcely be estimated in terms of dollars," say the officials. "But it is believed that such return more than justifies this type of work. In addition to conserving water and affording jobs to those in need of relief, the restoration of waterfowl areas is a direct aid to a nation-wide hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreational trade doing an estimate business of \$750,000,000 annually.

"Prior to the days of drainage and drought the fur industry in North Dakota provided a cash income well over \$2,000,000 annually, principally through the sale of muskrat and mink pelts. Restoration of wildlife refuges encourages the propagation of fur animals and the stocking of other areas where the animals may be trapped."